CHAPTER V.

CAPITAL.

Chapter V. Capital.

UNDER the heads of Traders and Capitalists the 1882-83 license tax returns show 1801 persons assessed on yearly incomes of £50 and upwards. Of this number, 865 had £50, 316 from £50 to £75, 195 from £75 to £100, seventy from £100 to £125, 110 from £125 to £150, ninety-nine from £150 to £200, sixty from £200 to £300, thirty from £300 to £400, thirty-four from £400 to £500, thirteen from £500 to £750, and five from £750 to £1000.[1] Of these 1801 capitalists and traders 1295 were moneylenders, 239 were traders, and forty-nine were brokers.

Currency.

[2]Before Belgaum became a military station (about 1818) ordinary business was carried on either by the Sháhápur or by the Shambhu rupee which was coined at Vádi in the South Konkan. The Sháhápur rupee was a sound coin with a certain and uniform proportion of silver and alloy. The Shambhu rupee, which weighed about 173 grains Troy and was worth 1*s.* 8*d.* (13½ *as.*), was less certain and uniform in its proportion of silver and alloy and was rated at four or five per cent below the Sháhápur rupee. In 1822 these were the only coins used by villagers. The establishment of the Division Pay Office at Belgaum, and the necessity of supplying from the Ceded Districts in Madras funds to meet the expenses of the civil and military establishments, brought into use numerous other coins.[3] Of these the Company's Madras rupee was worth eleven per cent and the Bágalkot rupee was worth two per cent more than the Sháhápur coin; on the other hand the rupee from Chándor in Násik was two and a half per cent, the Hukeri current in Kolhápur was nine per cent, and the Haidarabad, Udváni, and Govind Bakshi rupees were twelve per cent below the Sháhápur rupee.[4] All of these coins were freely used by the shopkeepers in their daily dealings. Among them, from its intrinsic worth, the Company's rupee bore a high price, and it was sent in large numbers as bullion to the Sháhápur mint. In 1822 the only copper

---

[1] Since 1879 incomes under £50 have been free from the license tax. The 1878 license tax returns showed 13,810 persons with yearly incomes of £10 to £50, 7838 with £10 to £15, 3462 with £15 to £25, 1714 with £25 to £35, and 796 with £35 to £50.

[2] Marshall's Statistical Reports, Bombay 1822, 21, 49-50, 55-56.

[3] In March 1820 the Belgaum troops were paid in no less than twenty-one different sorts of money. Many of these coins were unknown to the petty dealers in the market and they passed into the hands of the moneydealers who made large profits on the transaction. Marshall's Statistical Reports, 49.

[4] In 1822 a bill was not procurable on Haidarabad at a better rate than 100 Sháhápur for 106 Udváni, the difference of six per cent being regarded as the carriage and insurance of the cash to Haidarabad. Marshall's Statistical Reports, 55.

coin in circulation was the *Sháhu Paisa*, apparently coined at Sátára by Sháhu (1708-1750) the grandson of Shivájí. In 1822 it weighed about 154 grains Troy; the impression was generally worn away. At present (1884) the Imperial rupee is the standard coin over the whole district.

Except at Sháhápur there is little trade in *hundis* or exchange bills. In the towns of Athni, Belgaum, Gokák, Hongal, Nandgad, Nipáni, Sankeshvar, and Saundatti not more than twenty persons, chiefly Lingáyats Bráhmans and a few Márwár-Vánis Jains and Musalmáns, issue exchange bills. In Athni these bills go to £1000 (Rs. 10,000), in Belgaum to £250 (Rs. 2500), in Gokák to £500 (Rs. 5000), in Hongal and Nandgad to £200 (Rs. 2000), in Nipáni to £300 (Rs. 3000), in Sankeshvar to £200 (Rs. 2000), and in Saundatti to £100 (Rs. 1000). In 1822 the Sháhápur bankers were merely agents for the bankers of New Hubli and Miraj. They did not grant bills on towns beyond a circle of about a hundred miles. If the place on which the bill was required was one of the few that to any large extent dealt direct with Sháhápur the price of the bill was nearly the market rate of the coin of the same place with an additional half or one per cent for agency charges.[1] At present (1883) at Sháhápur exchange bills to the amount of about £80,000 (Rs. 8,00,000) a year are issued on Bombay, Chiplun, Gadag, Madras, Nipáni, Poona, Sátára, and Vengurla. These exchange bills are generally discounted at one-fourth to one and a half per cent. In March, April, and May, when traders lay in stock for the rainy season, the rate of discount rises to three per cent.

Bills.

The classes who save are Government servants, pleaders, moneylenders, and large traders and shopkeepers, chiefly Bráhmans, Lingáyats, and a few Gujarát and Márwár Vánis. The land proprietors or *inámdárs* are improvident. They keep establishments which they are unable to support, and spend sums which they can ill afford on caste dinners and in holding marriages and other ceremonies. The agricultural classes as a rule are badly off, their holdings being generally too small to enable them to save any considerable sums. The few husbandmen who save generally spend their savings in improving their land. Craftsmen, especially town craftsmen, are better off. If they do not save much, they are at least freer from debt than most of the other middle and lower classes. Except those who are in the service of Europeans servants do not save.

Savings.

Before 1876, when there was no restriction as to the amount any one person might invest in them, moneylenders put large sums in the Savings Banks. Since 1876, when the amount which any one

[1] Such a bill was the conveyance of a real mercantile balance and the trade of Hubli and Miraj afforded such bills to a much greater extent both as to the field and the amount than the limited transactions of Sháhápur. The bill transactions even of the Sháhápur bankers were on no very large scale. If they drew largely they were frequently obliged to make real remittances of specie to answer their own bills, in which case the exchange rate was very nearly the actual cost of sending the specie. Marshall's Statistical Reports, 55.

Chapter V. Capital.

Investments. *Securities.*

person might lodge was limited to £300 (Rs. 3000), the Government Savings Banks are used mostly by Government servants and pleaders, sometimes by moneylenders and shopkeepers, and rarely by husbandmen. In 1882 the investments in Savings Banks amounted to £9067 (Rs. 90,670). In 1882, £16,260 (Rs. 1,62,600) were invested in Government promissory notes. The whole amount was held by twenty-seven investers, £5850 (Rs. 58,530) being held by three moneylenders, £5500 (Rs. 55,000) by six land-proprietors, £2330 (Rs. 23,300) by eight Government servants, £1650 (Rs. 16,500) by five wives and widows of Government servants, £500 (Rs. 5000) by two shopkeepers, and £430 (Rs. 4300) by three Government pensioners.

Land.

Except by moneylenders little or no capital is invested in land or in house-building. Land is bought neither by Government servants nor by pleaders, but it is often taken in mortgage by moneylenders, and of late years much has passed into their hands. Moneylenders seldom invest money in improving their land. During the last twenty years the price and the rent of land have greatly risen. Garden land fetches £10 to £30 (Rs. 100-300) the acre, rice land £2 to £10 (Rs. 20 - 100), and dry-crop land £1 to £1 10*s.* (Rs. 10 - 15). As a rule moneylenders do not themselves till the land which is mortgaged to them. They rent it generally to the former holder at three or four times the assessment, or they take half of the produce and from their share pay the Government assessment. The tenant or under-holder usually pays his rent in kind.

Houses.

In rural Belgaum investment in house-building is unknown. New houses are almost always built by persons who mean to live in them. In small villages houses are often let rent-free on condition that the tenants keep them in repair. In large villages house-rent varies from 10*s.* to £4 (Rs. 5-40) a year, and in towns from £1 4*s.* to £10 (Rs. 12-100). Even in the city of Belgaum there is little house-building. The houses built for Europeans, if not occupied, are allowed to fall into disrepair, and no new houses have lately been built. The houses held by Europeans pay monthly rents varying from £1 to £8 (Rs. 10-80), and the houses in the native town of Belgaum yield monthly rents of 4*s.* to 16*s.* (Rs. 2-8). The few new houses generally belong to moneylenders. These are better built and better placed than those built thirty years ago, both air and light are more freely admitted. As land, timber, and labour are dearer, the cost of house-building is much greater than it formerly was.

Ornaments.

With all classes ornaments are the favourite form of investment. Those who can afford it, almost always spend part of their savings in buying ornaments whose workmanship varies with the rank and position of the wearer. The lowest classes have silver bangles and bracelets with an occasional gold necklace or *tika* and as a hair ornament a gold plate laid on brass. Many of the richer classes have gold earrings and necklaces, in many cases set with stones, and hair ornaments of solid gold.

Moneylending.

In Belgaum shopkeeping and moneylending go hand in hand. The trader who finds it difficult to develop his business invests

his profits in moneylending. Of all investments moneylending is considered the most profitable. Of £3822 (Rs. 38,220), the total amount collected under the license tax in 1882-83, £2942 (Rs. 29,420), or about seventy-five per cent, were collected from 1295 moneylenders who had yearly incomes of £50 (Rs. 500) and upwards. About forty per cent of the moneylenders are found in large towns and sixty per cent in villages. The chief moneylenders, both in towns and in villages, are Lingáyat or Karnátak Vánis, Bráhmans, and a few Jains, Maráthás, and Musalmáns. Of Márwár and Gujarát Vánis and Cutch Bhátiás, who are generally both traders and moneylenders, there are not more than 300. Of these about thirty are found in Belgaum, 200 in Chikodi, and the rest in Parasgad, Gokák, and Athni. The Bhátiás are a very small body. The Gujarát and Márwár Vánis are said to have come to the district about eighty years ago and they have since slowly but steadily increased in number and wealth. Still they are not strong enough to cause any serious interference with the moneylending of the local Lingáyats and Bráhmans. Few Gujarát or Márwár Vánis have permanently settled in the district; most of them go home for their marriages and other religious ceremonies. As creditors the outside Vánis are considered harsher and more unscrupulous than the local lenders. A poor man seldom escapes if he falls into a Márwári's clutches. The Lingáyats and Bráhmans who form the bulk of the moneylending class have comparatively a good name. Besides these professional moneylenders pleaders sometimes lend money to a small extent. Village headmen and Nárvekar husbandmen also often lend money, usually small sums, but sometimes as much as £20 to £50 (Rs. 200 - 500) to the people of their own village. They have a better name than professional moneylenders, being more tolerant of delay in paying and showing more regard to their debtors' circumstances. Besides the moneylenders of Belgaum, in the Sángli town of Sháhápur about a mile south of Belgaum, there are thirty moneylenders, 250 traders, and 320 weavers. Of all the towns within Belgaum limits Sháhápur is the foremost in wealth and has the best trade in cloth, pearls, and jewelry. Many of its moneylenders and traders carry on business both in Sháhápur and in Belgaum, and a large share of the district moneylending is in the hands of the Sháhápur moneylenders. They lend larger sums than other Belgaum moneylenders generally to persons of known credit and at less than the usual rate of interest. Rural traders and moneylenders sometimes borrow from the Sháhápur bankers. They are the only men of capital in the district whose credit is so good that people think it safe to lodge their savings in their hands. On sums lodged with them the Sháhápur moneylenders generally grant yearly interest at one and a half or two per cent. Village moneylenders generally lend at small sums, seldom more than £50 (Rs. 500). Town moneylenders lend larger sums on safer security and at lower interest. The commonest forms of security are a mortgage, pledge, or bill of sale of any property the borrower may own. Land, and sometimes houses, trees, cattle, and standing crops, are taken in mortgage, and ornaments and sometimes stock in trade are pledged. With people

Chapter V. Capital.

Moneylending.

of good credit a simple bond or a bond with a surety is a sufficient security for a loan. Of moneylenders the people say, 'They save us and they ruin us.' They save the husbandman by advancing him money and grain when his crop has failed, or when his store is exhausted and the new crop is not ripe; they ruin the husbandman by the burden of heavy and compound interest, a burden from which he can seldom set himself free.

Márwár and Gujarát Vánis and Bhátias keep ledgers or *kirdas* and day-books or *khatávnis* in which balances are made up daily, weekly, or fortnightly. Other moneylenders keep only rough books called *botakhátás* and bonds.[1] When a husbandman is embarrassed his different creditors do not combine to share his property. Each works for himself, tries to realise what he can, and never writes off an amount as a bad debt. The only exception is that in some cases creditors, gaining nothing by keeping a debtor in prison, let him out and allow their claim to become time-barred. A debtor has generally current dealings with one creditor. The growing crop is generally pledged to this creditor, who often has it attached and sold in execution of his decree. In no case is the power of the creditor independent of the civil court. The civil court is the last resort of all moneylenders except those who advance only on gold and silver ornaments and are never forced to go to court. The moneylender does not rest satisfied with what payments he can extract from his debtor under fear that the decree will be put into execution. Before putting the decree into execution the creditor waits for some time to induce his debtor to come to terms. As a last resource he throws the debtor in jail or he sells the debtor's property. The immoveable property, which is generally previously mortgaged or otherwise encumbered, when put to sale seldom fetches a good price. The indebtedness of the poorer cultivators almost never leads to agrarian crime.

Interest.

Except among Márwár and Gujarát Vánis who use the *Samvat* year beginning from *Kártik* or November, the *Shak* year beginning from *Chaitra* or March-April is in general use.[2] As interest is charged monthly and not yearly, an extra sum is levied when an additional or intercalary month occurs. The rate of interest depends partly on the credit of the borrower and partly on the amount borrowed. In the case of a borrower of good credit the yearly rate of interest for sums between £50 and £100 (Rs. 500-1000) is eight to twelve per cent and for sums of more than £100 (Rs. 1000) lent to bankers six to nine per cent. One case is mentioned in which one moneylender borrowed from another, at different times, sums amounting to as much as £2200 (Rs. 22,000) at a yearly interest of five and a quarter per cent. For large traders with good credit the rate of interest varies from eight to twelve per cent; for small traders and craftsmen it varies from twelve to twenty-four per cent; and for husbandmen and labourers it varies from eighteen to thirty-seven and a half per cent. The interest

[1] The *botákháta* is never produced in court and its existence is denied.
[2] The *Samvat* era begins with B.C. 56, the *Shak* era with A.D. 78.

charged when property is mortgaged varies from six to twelve per cent when ornaments are pledged, and from nine to twenty-four per cent when land is pledged. During the last thirty years there has been no considerable change in the rate of interest.

Borrowers.

Almost all classes borrow to meet wedding and other special charges. Of all borrowers husbandmen are the worst off; traders and craftsmen have better credit, and labourers have so little credit that they cannot sink deep into debt. Large traders, who sometimes borrow to meet special expenses or to face some mercantile loss, can raise money at eight to twelve per cent on bonds with or without security. To lay in a sufficient stock for the rainy season small traders generally raise loans in April and May at twelve per cent and more by pledging their goods. In the larger towns the craftsmen are fairly free from debt. Weavers often borrow to meet their daily expenses, but blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, masons, potters, and shoemakers are seldom in want of funds. Their credit is fair. To meet wedding and other special expenses the town craftsman can raise a loan from professional moneylenders at twelve to twenty-four per cent, and the village craftsman, who is sometimes a husbandman as well as a craftsman, at eighteen to twenty-four per cent. During the rains, when their services are in little demand, craftsmen have sometimes to borrow to meet their daily expenses. Of husbandmen about one-fourth are well-to-do and free from debt. The rest except the poorest are able to live comfortably without the help of moneylenders in an ordinary year, but, on account of their small holdings, they are forced to incur debts in times of unusual scarcity and on occasions of marriages and other family events. During the rains the poorer husbandmen have sometimes to seek advances of grain either for food or for seed from the richer landholders or from moneylenders who generally store grain in pits. An advance of grain is generally paid in kind at harvest time with an addition of one-fourth to one-half of the quantity advanced. Husbandmen often raise loans to supply the loss of cattle, to build a new house, to pay wedding and other special expenses and, during years of scarcity and bad crops, to buy food and seed for the next year's crops and to pay the Government assessment. If his land is unburdened a husbandman can easily raise £5 (Rs. 50). But, even among husbandmen whose credit is good, not more than twenty per cent can raise a loan of over £8 (Rs. 80) without mortgaging land, house, or other property. The credit of a large portion of the husbandmen is poor and they have to pay extremely heavy interest. For husbandmen with fair credit the yearly rate of interest varies from eighteen to twenty-four per cent on the security of land or house property, from nine to twelve per cent on the security of ornaments, and from twenty-four to thirty-seven and a half per cent on personal security. For husbandmen with little or no credit the rate of interest is invariably thirty-seven and a half per cent. When the nominal rate of interest is between twenty-four and thirty-seven and a half per cent, if the principal and interest are paid in time, the moneylender sometimes remits part of the interest on closing the account. During the 1876-77 famine, Belgaum, specially Athni Parasgad and Sampgaon, suffered severely. The

Chapter V. Capital.

famine greatly reduced the husbandman's credit. Want of money, rather than any growth of thrift or forethought, has led most husbandmen to reduce their marriage expenses by one-third. At the same time there seems to be some increase of forethought, as since the famine the practice of storing grain in pits is commoner than it was. During the six years ending 1882 borrowing is said to have become more general among the husbandmen than it was before the famine. The chief causes are the famine of 1876 and 1877, and the scanty and irregular rainfall and consequent bad seasons between 1878 and 1881.

Land Transfers.

A good deal of land changes hands in one of three ways, from the failure of the holder to pay the assessment, under the orders of the civil courts, and by voluntary sale or mortgage. Cases of land being given up by its holder or sold by Government on account of the holder's failure to pay rent are not common. If the land is worth keeping, the holder, if in difficulty, usually prefers to borrow to pay the assessment rather than lose his land. During the three years ending 1882 the sales of land under the orders of the civil court averaged fifty-six. Land which is sold under the orders of the civil courts is generally of poor or middle quality; it is mostly bought by Lingáyat and Bráhman moneylenders. Land is seldom transferred by voluntary sale. Unless it is very poor, landholders do their utmost to keep the land in their own cultivation even if they are forced to part with the ownership to moneylenders. The usual forms of land mortgage are mortgages with or without possession. In the beginning most husbandmen who till their own lands raise loans by mortgaging land without possession. The rate of interest demanded in such cases generally ranges from eighteen to twenty-four per cent. So high a rate of interest leaves little chance of clearing the debt. Part of the interest remains unpaid and the gathered interest gradually increases the principal until principal and interest together equal the value of the land mortgaged. The moneylender then practically takes possession of the land, though he seldom appeals to the civil court to have his possession legally recognized. The fear of losing his land usually induces the husbandman to continue tilling on almost any terms the moneylender may lay down. In this way land which is once mortgaged without possession passes into the hands of the moneylender as completely as if it was mortgaged with possession. When land is mortgaged to a moneylender with possession, though it stands in the name of the husbandman and though he may continue to till it, the land is in the possession of the lender and the husbandman's ownership is nominal. Cases of mortgage with possession are common. One-fourth and sometimes more than one-fourth of the gross produce is paid as the interest of the mortgage, but one-fourth is seldom enough to meet the amount due under interest, so that the husbandman becomes more and more involved and his chance of recovering his land continues to grow smaller.

Labour Mortgage.

Bráhmans Jains and Lingáyats sometimes, and workmen and husbandmen, chiefly shepherds Mhárs and Mángs, often raise money by mortgaging their labour for a term of years. The rate at

Labour Mortgage.

which the pledger's service is valued depends on his need, his credit, and his power of work. Bráhmans, Lingáyats, and others belonging to the higher classes pledge their labour either as writers, accountants, or clerks; workmen and husbandmen pledge their labour generally as house or field workers. Formerly the practice of raising loans by labour-mortgages was common among labourers. Of late, as work has been fairly plentiful and wages regular, the practice of workmen mortgaging their labour has become less common. The labour-mortgage bond is always written on stamped paper. The bond generally provides that the workman who pledges his labour shall be supplied with food and clothing, usually two waist-cloths, a blanket, and a pair of shoes a year. The bond also lays down the condition that, in default of service, the debt or the remaining portion of the debt shall be paid or interest be charged at twelve to thirty-six per cent for the time for which the debt shall remain unpaid. The relations of the labour-mortgager and mortgagee are the same as those of master and servant, the chief difference between a free and a pledged labourer being that the free labourer receives daily wages, while until his debt is paid the pledged labourer enjoys less freedom and receives only food and clothing.[1]

Wages.

About thirty years ago (1853) skilled labourers, carpenters, blacksmiths, and masons, were paid 6*d.* (4 *as.*) and bricklayers 4½*d.* (3 *as.*) a day. At present (1883) carpenters, blacksmiths, and masons are paid 9*d.* to 1*s.* (6-8 *as.*) and bricklayers 6*d.* to 9*d.* (4-6 *as.*) a day. These wages are paid in cash, either weekly or daily. The skilled labourers are chiefly Lingáyats, Maráthás, and Musalmáns. Even during the rains, when little is going on, skilled town labourers

[1] The following are translations of two Belgaum labour-bonds:

[1]. I, Venkáji Rámchandra, having received from you, Gopálráo Anna Dámle, a loan of rupees 100, sign, of my own free will, the following agreement for service in liquidation of my debt. I will live in your house for the next two years and do whatever service you may require, field labour, dunning debtors, and other miscellaneous work. I will claim no payment in cash for these services, but you should supply me with a blanket, two waistcloths each costing a rupee, and a pair of shoes. In this way shall my debt be paid by my service for a period of two years. In case I fail to complete the term of my service I agree to remain subject to the payment of what portion of my debt remains after deducting an amount proportionate to the time I shall have served, at the rate of rupees four a month. I further agree to pay such sum as shall remain if I do not complete my term of service, in a lump sum, and in case that sum be not paid at once I bind myself to pay interest at the rate of three rupees per cent a month in addition to the principal. My bond is to be returned to me when I pay off the debt by service or in money. This agreement is given of my free will and herein I will not fail.

Date ———. Name ———.

[2]. I have borrowed from you a sum of rupees one hundred for my own necessities. By way of paying that debt I agree to serve you in tending cattle and other field labour. I bind myself hereby to serve in this way for a period of four years from the date of this bond and to do in addition to the above service any similar work that you may impose upon me. At the end of the four years the sum borrowed is to be considered as fully paid and I am to be at liberty to offer my services to any other master. During the four years I will not cease to serve you. If I cease to serve you before the end of the four years, a sum proportionate to the period for which I shall have served, shall be taken from the original amount borrowed, and for the remaining amount from that date interest at the rate of one rupee per cent a month shall be paid. The further conditions are that you shall feed me twice a day and every year provide me with a pair of waistcloths, a pair of shoes, a handkerchief, a blanket, and two shirts. Under these conditions I agree to serve you.

Date ———. Name ———.

Chapter V. Capital. Wages.

and those employed by the Public Works Department find constant work of eight to ten hours a day. Their wives, who do not help them in their work, look after their houses and sometimes do a little spinning and weaving. Their condition is fair, though the rise in the price of grain takes considerably from the value of the increase in money wages. At present the services of skilled workmen are in good demand, chiefly by the Public Works Department and by railway contractors. On public works skilled labourers generally receive high daily wages, masons 10½*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* (7-12 *as.*), carpenters 9*d.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* (6-12 *as.*), blacksmiths 9*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* (6-10 *as.*), painters, tailors, and shoemakers 1*s.* (8 *as.*), and thatchers 9*d.* (6 *as.*). Village craftsmen are not nearly so well off as town craftsmen. During the rains their services are in little demand, even during the busy season the demand is not always enough to occupy their whole time. They generally combine tillage with their special calling. Most village carpenters and blacksmiths, who are usually village servants, supplement their daily wages by receiving at harvest time a grain allowance or *aya* from husbandmen whose field tools they repair. Of unskilled labourers, who are mostly Lingáyats, Maráthás, Musalmáns, Mhárs, and Mángs, town labourers are generally paid in cash and field labourers in grain. The daily wages of town labourers are for men 3*d.* to 5½*d.* (2-3½ *as.*), for women 1½*d.* to 3*d.* (1-2 *as.*), and for children ¾*d.* to 1½*d.* (½-1 *anna*). Thirty years ago the wages of unskilled labour were about two-thirds of the present rate. Labourers who find work in the city of Belgaum and on public works are generally better off than the rest of their class. As a rule town labourers have little work during the rains. The chief employment of labourers, especially of female labourers, is carrying, digging, and doing the rougher parts of house-building. On market days they earn twice or three times what they earn on other days. At harvest time town labourers occasionally work in the fields, when they are mostly paid in grain. Field labourers who are paid in grain get daily wages of 4 pounds to 10 pounds (2-5 *shers*) of grain for a man, 3 pounds to 4½ pounds (1½-3 *shers*) for a woman, and 1 pound to 2 pounds (½-1 *sher*) for a child. They work six to nine hours a day, and sometimes by doing night work earn half as much again as their regular day's wages. Their busiest time is ploughing and sowing in May and June, and weeding reaping and thrashing between September and December. As a rule field workers are paid daily wages, but reaping is sometimes paid by the piece. When employed in house-building or in digging a well, labourers sometimes bind themselves for a fixed sum or a fixed quantity of grain to attend daily till the work is finished. During the harvest months, that is from September to December, when work is harder and wages are higher than at other times, the labourers often save enough to keep them in fair comfort during the remaining eight months of the year. For the five months between January and May, when there is almost no field work, field labourers work in large towns, picking cotton and getting employment in the carrying trade to the Kánara, Goa, and Ratnágiri coast.

Price

Yearly price details, some of which are little more than estimates, are available for the fifty-nine years ending 1882. During these fifty-

nine years the rupee price of Indian millet or *jvári*, which is the staple grain of the district, varied from seventeen pounds in 1863 to 112 in 1849, and averaged sixty-one pounds. Of the fifty-nine years, in four the price was below 100 pounds the rupee, 112 in 1849, 108 in 1851, 103 in 1832, and 102 in 1850; in four it was between 100 and ninety pounds, ninety-eight in 1834, ninety-seven in 1829, ninety-two in 1844, and ninety-one in 1831; in four it was between ninety and eight pounds, ninety in 1842, eighty-five in 1845, and eighty-one in 1830 and 1852; in eleven it was between eighty and seventy pounds, seventy-nine in 1836 1848 1853 and 1856, seventy-eight in 1835 1843 and 1847, seventy-six in 1841, seventy-five in 1840, seventy-four in 1854, and seventy-one in 1839; in six it was between seventy and sixty pounds, sixty-eight in 1827 and 1837, sixty-six in 1857, sixty-three in 1828, and sixty-two in 1825 and 1855; in nine it was between sixty and fifty pounds, sixty in 1824 and 1858, fifty-nine in 1838, fifty-eight in 1846 and 1859, fifty-six in 1881, fifty-three in 1860, and fifty-two in 1826 and 1882; in seven it was between fifty and forty, forty-seven in 1833, forty-five in 1875, forty-four in 1868 1869 and 1874, and forty-three in 1862 and 1871; in six it was between forty and thirty pounds, forty in 1867, thirty-nine in 1861, thirty-eight in 1880, thirty-six in 1876, thirty-three in 1870, and thirty-two in 1873; and in eight it was between thirty and fifteen pounds, twenty-six in 1872, twenty-five in 1879, twenty-four in 1878, twenty-one in 1865, twenty in 1864 and 1877, eighteen in 1866, and seventeen in 1863. Till 1857, except in 1826 1833 and 1838, the price was below sixty pounds the rupee. Since 1857 the price has never been below sixty pounds.

The fifty-nine years may be divided into nine periods. In the five years ending 1828 the price varied from sixty-eight in 1827 to fifty-two in 1826 and averaged sixty-one pounds. Except in 1833 when the price was forty-seven pounds in the second period of eight years ending 1836, the price varied from 103 in 1832 to seventy-eight in 1835, and averaged eighty-four pounds. In the third period of the five years ending 1841, the price varied from seventy-six in 1841 to fifty-nine in 1838, and averaged seventy pounds. Except in 1846 when the price was fifty-eight pounds, in the fourth period of twelve years ending 1853, the price varied from 112 pounds in 1849 to seventy-eight in 1843 and 1847, and averaged eighty-seven pounds. In the fifth period of the nine years ending 1862 the price varied from seventy-nine in 1856 to thirty-nine in 1861 and averaged fifty-nine pounds. In the sixth period of the four years ending 1866 the price varied from twenty-one pounds in 1865 to seventeen in 1863 and averaged nineteen pounds. Except in 1872 when it was twenty-six pounds, the price during the seventh period of the ten years ending 1876 varied from forty-five in 1875 to thirty-two in 1873 and averaged thirty-nine pounds. In the eighth period of the three years ending 1879, the prices varied from twenty-five in 1879 to twenty pounds in 1877, and averaged twenty-three pounds. In the ninth period of the three years ending 1882 the price varied from fifty-six in 1881 to thirty-eight in 1880 and averaged forty-nine pounds:

Chapter V. Capital. Prices.

Belgaum Grain Prices in Pounds the Rupee, 1824-1882.

Produce.	First Period.					Second Period.								Third Period.	
	1824.	1825.	1826.	1827.	1829.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.
Indian Millet	60	62	52	63	63	97	81	91	103	47	98	78	79	68	59
Wheat	53	57	46	56	56	87	57	76	77	28	49	52	66	69	61
Rice	43	46	47	50	53	60	67	69	55	33	28	47	47	35	40

Produce.	Third Period —*contd.*			Fourth Period.										
	1839.	1840.	1841.	1842.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.	1853.
Indian Millet	71	75	76	90	78	92	86	58	78	79	112	102	108	81	79
Wheat	45	63	39	78	74	76	71	53	69	69	87	84	105	89	83
Rice	35	49	38	61	67	67	57	42	49	53	72	63	62	61	65

Produce.	Fifth Period.								Sixth Period.				Seventh Period.	
	1854.	1855.	1856.	1857.	1858.	1859.	1860.	1861.	1862.	1863.	1864.	1865.	1866.	1867.	1868.
Indian Millet	74	62	79	66	60	58	53	39	43	17	20	21	18	40	44
Wheat	81	53	78	61	58	55	37	22	41	17	12	15	10	21	39
Rice	65	48	41	39	41	41	34	27	30	17	13	15	15	21	25

Produce.	Seventh Period—*contd.*								Eighth Period.			Ninth Period.		
	1869.	1870.	1871.	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.	1878.	1879.	1880.	1881.	1882.
Indian Millet	44	33	43	26	32	44	45	36	20	24	25	38	56	52
Wheat	31	11	19	16	20	34	38	29	14	14	12	18	35	40
Rice	18	18	27	..	18	32	31	24	13	16	19	22	23	21

Weights and Measures.

Precious stones and pearls are not sold by weight. Their price is fixed by their size and quality according to rules which are known only to dealers in those articles. Gold and silver are bought and sold by small weights. The table used in weighing gold and silver is eight *gulugunjás* or Abrus seeds one *másа*, and twelve *másas* one *tola*. One *tola* is equal to 180 Troy grains. The *tola* is almost always represented by the Imperial rupee. Silver ornaments are almost always weighed against rupees. Copper, brass, tin, lead, iron, and grain are sold by *shers* and *mans*. The *sher* varies from twenty to eighty *tolás*. The eighty *tolás sher* is the full or Government *sher* and is equal to two English pounds. The *man* contains forty and occasionally forty-one *shers*. Green and dry grass are sold in small bundles called *pendis* or *sivadus*, of which about 200 go to the rupee. Lucern grass, which is in great demand in the Belgaum cantonment,

is sold at eighty to ninety pounds the rupee. Rice straw is usually sold by the cart and millet stalks or *karbi* by the cord that is in bundles containing as many stalks as can be bound in a rope six to eight feet long. Cotton, both cleaned and uncleaned, is bought and sold on the basis of fifty-two *shers* to the *man*, and twenty *mans* to the *khandi*. Of liquids, milk and sesamum castor and cocoanut oil are sold by a capacity measure which is equal to twenty rupees in weight. Fragrant and valuable oils are sold according to the table of weights used for gold and silver. Salt is bought wholesale according to the standard measure called *páili* which is equal to four *shers* or 320 *tolás*. It is sold retail by the standard *sher* of eighty *tolás*. The *páili* is made of iron or copper and is cylindrical in form. Bamboos are sold by tale, gravel and sand by the cartload, and cement and lime by ordinary capacity measures.

Of measures of length the *háth* or cubit, that is a foot and a half, is the unit of long measure. It is the length from the top of the middle finger when the hand is open to the point of the elbow joint, and in an adult averages eighteen inches. Two *háths* are equal to one *gaz, vár*, or yard. Nearly all soft goods are sold by the *háth* or cubit. But such articles as *chidis* or women's robes, *rumáls* or headscarves, and *kháns* or bodicecloth, are sold by tale, and waistcloths by the pair; carpets are sold according to their size; masonry is either contracted for as piece-work or at a fixed rate for the hundred cubic feet. Of stones large stones and coping stones are sold by cubic contents; paving stones and stones of a uniform section, only surface dressed, are sold by surface measurement; dressed stones are sold by cubic or surface measurement; and stones with varying sectional areas by tale. Roadmetal is sold by the cart-load. Timber, both green and seasoned, is sold by the cubic contents according to English measurement. The land measures at present in use are the acre and the *guntha* or one-fortieth of an acre. The people do not use the division into fortieths but apply the division into sixteenths speaking of the parts as *annás*. The use of weights of known form is now to a certain extent compulsory. Still in outlying villages rude lumps of lead or iron and stones and pieces of broken stone and earthenware are sometimes used as weights.